

(Milwaukee, WI)- Congresswoman Gwen Moore recorded the following statement today addressing the long term issues brought to light in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina:

"Hurricane Katrina has put a spotlight on those in our nation who are just barely getting by, and has underscored the role our government plays-or doesn't play-in serving the needs of Americans.

"While we're holding moments of silence for victims of Hurricane Katrina, what happens tomorrow, or next month, or next year when these people need somewhere to live? In other words, this is really about a larger debate we have been having in the federal government-are we going to operate like a community or are we going to tell people "hey, you're on your own"? The squalor and suffering our nation witnessed at the New Orleans Superdome and Convention Center serves as a horrific example of what can happen when all three branches of government are controlled by a party who thinks the citizens of America should be left to take care of themselves.

"Even now we're holding our breath to see what Ophelia will bring. Any number of natural disasters could occur at any time. But it's not just hurricanes, earthquakes, and tornadoes that destroy working families who already live dangerously close to poverty. It only takes the smaller personal disasters to send any one of us over the edge and into desperate trouble, from a major illness and lack of healthcare to the loss of a job or the inability to get a good education. And it is a problem when in response, officials can only talk about their so-called 'ownership society' when it really is a 'you're on your own' society. Our government is a collective effort for meeting community needs-roads, security, homeland security, health care, education, clean water, clean air. It's about priorities.

"Many members of Congress are looking at this catastrophe as an opportunity to ask the Bush administration about some of the Draconian resource shifts that have taken place under their watch. Even now the Republican leadership is planning to cut billions more from healthcare, student loan programs, and food stamps while mulling over an additional \$70 billion in tax cuts for the richest Americans-above and beyond tax cuts that have already been given over the past four years. These irresponsible decisions do not leave government with enough resources to meet the needs of our national community.

"Each of us can and should drop our canned goods in the basket as often as we can, but there just aren't enough individual donations in the world to replace good government and what it can do and should do for people."

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